

FORM B – BUILDING

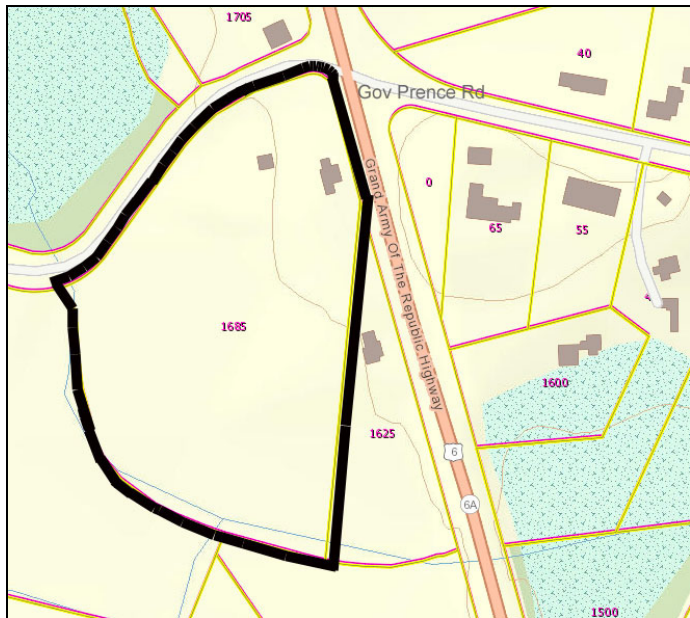
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



View from north (Photo by Town of Eastham Assessor).

Locus Map (north at top)



Recorded by: Larson Fisher Associates, Inc. with Kathryn Grover

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date: May 2013

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

18-308

ORLEANS

EAS.20

Town/City: Town of Eastham

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): South Eastham

Address: 1685 State Highway

Historic Name: John G. & Clara P. Fulcher House

Uses: Present: single-family residence

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1916

Source: maps, censuses, vital records

Style/Form: Bungalow

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete block

Wall/Trim: wood shingles/wood

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: domestic accessory building (original use unknown)

Major Alterations (*with dates*): south and north side ells (dates unknown)

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 4.018 acres

Setting: The subject property includes a large tract that extends from the southwest corner of the intersection of State Highway and Governor Prence Rd. west along the latter roadway and south to a stream that curves around the south portion of the lot. Two-family dwellings lie across the roadways to the north and east while a single family house is on the adjoining lot to the south. Large wetlands lie across the bordering roadways to the northwest and southeast.

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Although the Assessor has a date of 1890 for the house on the subject property, its architectural appearance does not reflect that date. Rather a 1916 date, as supported by the historical research (below), is reflected in the architectural expression which is that of a Bungalow. The low-pitched gable roof flares out over what was likely originally an open porch that is now enclosed. The resulting current front facade has a center entrance flanked by paired three-over-one windows of the Craftsman style with vertical muntins in the upper sash. There are two recessed gable-roofed ells—one off each end of the house. The left (south) side ell is set farther back from the front facade than the one on the right. It is virtually invisible from public view, being screened by mature evergreen shrubs. A large wood deck extends back from the rear of this ell. The roof of the right (north) side ell has a ridge line slightly lower than that of the main house and has a lower pitch suggesting that it was a later addition. This section of the house is distinguished by dentils along the cornice and original twelve-over-twelve windows. The front door looks to be original. The entire building is clad with weathered wood shingles; it has white painted corner boards and trim throughout. The house was reroofed with “architectural” asphalt shingles in 2007; a brick chimney was probably removed at that time.¹ No other building permits are on file for this property.

The subject property slopes down from the front property line along State Highway to a stream and heavily wooded area that defines its western and southwesterly boundary. A detached accessory building with front gable roof occupies a lower area of the property northwest of the house. It has a front gable roof, a small vehicular door and window on its east side and is clad with the same weathered wood shingles as the house. It may have been a utilitarian farm outbuilding at one time (see Historical Narrative, below) that has since been converted to domestic use. An unimproved roadway off Governor Prentice Road, that defines the northern property boundary, provides vehicular access to the property.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The house at 1685 State Highway is not shown on the few town maps (1858, 1880, 1905, and 1908) that depict buildings with owners' names. It appears to have been built about 1916, when John G. Fulcher (1866-1938) married Clara Paine Higgins (1859-1950) in Eastham, though Fulcher is never shown in tax records through 1947 as the owner of any Eastham real estate. The 1685 State Highway property was instead owned through 1946 by John's younger brother Obed Abelino Fulcher, and it occupied land that their father John Fulcher (1838-99) had owned since 1867.

Born in Great Yarmouth, England, John Fulcher was a mariner who later became a farmer, the career path of many Eastham men. At the age of twelve he was working as a cabin boy aboard the British brig *Margaret* when it foundered off Cape Cod in April 1852. According to local historian Alice Lowe, Freeman Doane Mayo of Eastham found the boy lashed to the vessel's mast on the beach and brought him to Eastham. Fulcher got work on the farm of Ezekiel Doane on the east side of State Highway, and in 1859 Fulcher married Ezekiel and Rachel Doane's daughter Josephine Helena Doane (1840-1916).² In 1867 he bought numerous parcels from his in-laws and others on both sides of State Highway and ranging along the south side of what is now Governor Prentice Road on the west side of the Highway (Cedar Swamp Road on earlier maps) and built a home on that road.³ In the 1900 census, a year after he died, his widow Josephine is enumerated in the house with her son John G. (his middle name is given as Grayson and Gregory in different genealogies), born in 1866; daughters Josephine and Sarah, born in 1876 and 1878 respectively; son Louis, born in 1880; and son Obed A., born in 1884.

Tax records for 1902 show Josephine Fulcher with a house, a barn, hen houses and other outbuildings, livestock, and more than 61 acres in various parcels. The 1910 census shows John G. and Obed A. Fulcher in the same household with their widowed mother and Obed's wife Lottie Marion Young of Chatham, whom he married in 1905. In March 1916, three months before she died, Josephine Fulcher deeded to her sons John G. and Obed A. a half-acre parcel with a dwelling and other buildings, which was probably the homestead parcel on Governor Prentice Road, and all of the other real property her late husband had owned except for two parcels not in this neighborhood.⁴ In October of the same year John G. Fulcher married Clara Paine Higgins of Eastham, and, though no map or deed documents it, it seems likely that the house at 1685 State Highway was built for John and his new wife to occupy.

The 1920 census shows John G. Fulcher as a truck farmer renting his house and living with his wife Clara and a boarder; his brother Obed's household is enumerated just before his own. In 1923 John G. Fulcher deeded his interest in his father's real estate to his brother Obed,⁵ and tax records for 1926 show him with livestock but no real property. In that year Obed Fulcher is

¹ Town of Eastham records, building permit dated June 21, 2007, for reroofing. The photo attached to the 1995 inventory form shows a substantial interior brick chimney.

² Alice A. Lowe, *Nauset on Cape Cod: A History of Eastham* (Falmouth, MA: Eastham Historical Society, 1968), 107.

³ See, for example, Rachel A. and Ezekiel Doane to John Fulcher, 4 May 1867, Barnstable County Registry of Deeds (hereafter cited as BCD) 93:190; Rebecca Paine to John Fulcher, 28 May 1867, BCD 93:273; and Micah S. Paine to John Fulcher, 1 November 1867, BCD 93:493.

⁴ Josephine H. Fulcher to John G. and Obed A. Fulcher, 7 March 1916, BCD 347:78.

⁵ John G. Fulcher to Obed A. Fulcher, 23 April 1923, BCD 391:576.

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listed as owner of only one house, a barn and shed, a poultry house, and seven-acre homestead tract, and 31.5 acres in other parcels.

The 1929 Cape Cod directory listed Obed Fulcher is his father's Governor Prentice Road house and John G. as a farmer on King's Highway. The 1930 census continues to show John as a renter; by then he was working as a cemetery caretaker. Tax records for 1931 show him as owner of three acres but still no buildings, while his brother continues to be shown with only one house. In that year Obed also owned a barn and shed, which the town assessed at the relatively high value of \$2000, as well as a poultry house and a pump house.

John G. Fulcher died in 1938 and his widow, Clara, appears to have rented out the house in 1940 (though the census shows her as "Carrie" and renting on Governor Prentice Road and having lived in the same house in 1935). In May 1946 Obed Fulcher deeded the subject property to his oldest son Herbert Douglas Fulcher (b. Eastham 1915), who had served in the Army in World War II and had married by then. The property included the house and four acres.⁶ Tax records for 1947 show Herbert and Elva Fulcher with four acres and a house valued at \$900; Obed owned a house valued at \$2200, a barn, a poultry house, pump house, the "Speare Cottage" valued at \$400 (as much as the pump house), and sixteen acres of land.

Herbert and Elva Fulcher owned 1685 State Highway until 1960, when they deeded the property back to his parents. In 1969 Obed and Lottie Fulcher sold the property to Ellen Janet Fulcher Westergard, their youngest daughter (born 1928) and her husband Raymond. They owned the property until 1973. Current owners Rudolph A. and Jane B. Bodamer of Bristol, Connecticut, acquired the property in 1981.

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MAPS

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PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2012-2013 unless otherwise noted)

⁶ Obed A. Fulcher to Herbert D. and Elva Fulcher, 29 May 1946, BCD 648:230.

⁷ Herbert D. and Elva Fulcher to Obed A. and Lottie M. Fulcher, 21 December 1960, BCD 1103:88; Obed A. and Lottie M. Fulcher to Raymond F. and E. Janet Westergard, 17 November 1969, BCD 1456:406; Westergards to Nancy E. Brown, 15 June 1973, BCD 1949:337; Cynthia Bivins Murphy to Rudolph A. and Jane B. Bodamer, 31 July 1981, BCD 3335:342.

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View from east-northeast.